

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 ARAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9970

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 9039

DEFENSE ALSO FOR DEFENSE MAPPING AGENCY (VADM KRAMER)

CINCSO ALSO FOR IAGS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS VE

SUBJECT: CODESUR AIRCRAFT

REF STATE 195938

BEGIN SUMMARY: GOV CARTOGRAPHIC OFFICE IS UNABLE TO BUY OR LEASE UH-1H HELICOPTERS, BUT VENEZUELAN AIR FORCE IS INTERESTED IN PURCHASING BOTH THE HELICOPTERS AND THE U-1A "OTTER." I RECOMMEND THAT WE PROVIDE PURCHASE PRICE TO VENEZUELAN AIR FORCE SOONEST AND ATTEMPT TO SELL HELICOPTERS BEFORE MAKING FINAL DECISION TO REMOVE THEM FROM VENEZUELA. END SUMMARY

1. IN RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST FOR \$117,000 REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXTENDING LEASE ON THREE UH-1H HELICOPTERS (REFTEL), GOV CARTOGRAPHIC OFFICE DIRECTOR, ON BEHALF OF MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS, OFFICIALLY INFORMED IAGS ON AUG 27 THAT HE COULD NOT OBTAIN FUNDS FOR LEASE OR PURCHASE OF AIRCRAFT. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR LOAN OF HELICOPTERS SINCE 1972 AND SAID THAT U.S. COULD INITIATE ACTION TO REMOVE AIRCRAFT. THIS NOTIFICATION TERMINATES DIRECT U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN CODESUR PROGRAM, ALTHOUGH THE IAGS PROGRAM ITSELF WILL CONTINUE. IAGS HAS ALREADY ASSUMED
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OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE HELICOPTERS AND IS KEEPING THEM ON THE

GROUND.

2. SHORTLY AFTER RECEIPT OF CARTOGRAPHIC OFFICE DIRECTOR'S LETTER, IAGS AND MILGP RECEIVED INQUIRIES FROM VENEZUELAN AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS WHICH EXPRESSED STRONG INTEREST IN PURCHASING ALL THREE HELICOPTERS AND THE U-1A "OTTER" FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT. THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT ON AUG 28 THE MOD INSTRUCTED THE AIR ATTACHE AT THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TO SEEK FROM DOD A LETTER OF OFFER ON THE AIRCRAFT, FOLLOWING STANDARD FMS CASH SALES PROCEDURES.

3. IN MY VIEW, THE MOST PRACTICAL AND ECONOMICAL COURSE NOW WOULD BE TO SELL THESE AIRCRAFT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO THE VENEZUELAN AIR FORCE AND KEEP THEM HERE UNDER U.S. CONTROL UNTIL THIS TRANSACTION IS COMPLETED. INDEED, WE WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO EXPLAIN WHY WE COULD NOT OFFER THESE AIRCRAFT TO THE AIR FORCE WHEN WE HAVE RECENTLY OFFERED THEM TO ANOTHER BRANCH OF THE GOV. I HOPE THAT DOD WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WITH A FIRM PRICE ESTIMATE WITHOUT DELAY. FROM THIS END, WE WILL POINT OUT TO THE VENEZUELAN AIR FORCE THAT WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARING THE AIRCRAFT FOR REMOVAL FROM COUNTRY AND WILL PRESS FOR A PROMPT DECISION TO BUY THEM.
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Message Attributes

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